

PEACE NEWS

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Toward The Abyss

By WILFRED WELLOCK

THE more I contemplate the European scene and the growing dimensions of this war, both in its extensity and in its power of destruction, the more I am convinced that everything Britain professes to be fighting for will be lost in the process of fighting.

The events of the last few weeks make it crystal clear that reason, generosity, and good will will play no part in the peace; that in fact, the peace will just make itself, with the British and American statesmen completely outside it. Forces are now being let loose which no one can control, not even Mr. Churchill. In consequence Britain's power over the destinies of Europe will gradually fade away.

The territorial extension of the war is staggering and terrifying. All the big Powers are now in it, notwithstanding that the USA has not formally declared war and that the Far Eastern conflict has not been linked up with the Western.

Even more significant and appalling are the new dimensions of the war's killing and destructive power. The German invasion of Russia has revealed, as nothing hitherto has done, the terrific scale upon which villages, towns, and cities can be literally wiped out, and entire army divisions obliterated in a single night, their bodies and their vast equipment becoming a sprawl of wreckage upon what was a few hours before a cultivated plain.

Moreover, every day adds to this destructive power through the aid of a science bent to that specific task. One week there emerges a more powerful bomb, the next a more terrifying tank, the week after a plane of greater bomb-carrying capacity.

Then, close on the heels of a series of such discoveries, each of which has been duly announced with the obvious intention of keeping the war spirit at fever heat, comes a ministerial announcement, often by the Prime Minister himself, that a new reign of terror has to be visited upon the enemy.

SAVAGE GLEE

The gleeful manner in which these announcements are made calls for serious consideration. On the occasion of Mr. Churchill's broadcast speech delivered at the County Hall, London, on July 14th, his threats of reprisals upon the German nation evoked laughter, to hear which filled one with something akin to horror.

One suddenly realized that as a nation we were running the whole way back to Wotanism, inspired by a new technique for doing what savages do by means of war dances. Within a week our newspapers were announcing that the RAF had wiped out one-third of two German towns.

This new descent into wholesale slaughter and destruction, together with the manner of its proclamation, is surely one of the most ominous events in the course of the war. Where it will carry us no-one can foretell.

THE REMEDY IS YOURS

A paragraph, which lately appeared both in the Nottingham Journal and the Northern Echo, gloats over the drop in our Fighting Fund and makes the sinister insinuation that if in spite of this Peace News continues to appear, Mr. Morrison would be well advised to investigate our sources of income. Although we welcome any inquiry into our sources of income, which reduce to one—the loyalty of pacifists—we suggest that the best way of disposing of this perricious propaganda is to keep the fund at its former high level.

Last week's contributions amounted only to £14 16s. 6d., making the grand total £2,388 11s. Hunt those treasures!

The Editor

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but undoubtedly farther and farther down the Gadarene slope to complete despair and shrieking madness.

Once the nations at war deliberately embark on the course of reprisals, there is little hope of turning back, or even of stopping, except from sheer physical and emotional exhaustion—in which condition anything can happen, including stark-mad revolution.

WORDS OF WARNING

Perhaps Mr. Churchill would do well to remember some words uttered by a predecessor of his, Mr. Stanley Baldwin, but a few years ago when the events were taking place which have given rise to the present conflagration. Speaking of the possible use of poison gas in a European war, he said:

I believe that if such a thing were done, when that war came to an end the raging peoples of every country, torn with passion, suffering, and horror, would wipe out every government in Europe and you would have a state of anarchy from end to end of it as man's protest against wickedness in high places.

Two months later, Mr. Baldwin reinforced that statement with this even more pointed declaration:

I believe the horrors of another modern war in Europe might lead to the revolt of the peoples against all their leaders, and that you might soon find Europe in a state of completely barbarous anarchy from end to end.

So heavily was this issue resting upon Mr. Baldwin's mind at that time, that six weeks later, addressing Canadian ex-service men in Westminster Hall, he said:

If the world—Europe and the world—can find no other way of settling disputes than by war, even now, when we are still finding and burying the bodies of those who fell twenty years ago—if they can find no other way the world deserves to perish.

Our statesmen would do well to remember that their fury may release forces which will wreck far more

things in Europe than Hitler and his regime, values which will lead to the overthrow of many institutions, including the bulwarks of class and the idols of a false righteousness. A year of air-war reprisals may well exhaust the emotional and moral energies of every nation which participates in it, and so place a sane peace and a safe future utterly beyond our reach.

PEACE AIMS SHELVED

It can now be concluded that Mr. Churchill's County Hall speech has put the issue of peace aims completely outside the realm of serious discussion. To mete out punishment to a whole people, most of whom feel as helpless and hopeless as do the British people under the domination of a ceaseless propaganda, is to produce a state of mind in which the terms of a reasonable world cannot be formulated.

The statesmen of Europe are now putting a strain upon human nature under which, sooner or later, it must break, and when the breaking-point is reached they will have no more control over it than new-born babes. By releasing the forces of revenge, they are undermining their own authority. How long, for instance will the German people be able to stand the strain of the Russian slaughter when they realize its colossal magnitude? Once their cup of suffering and agony begins to run over, things unspeakable may happen. The wounding and slaughter of a million men in four weeks is stark madness, power run wild. No good can conceivably come of it, for in such butchery the means defeats the end. And if revolution occurs, Mr. Baldwin may turn out to be a true prophet.

And where do we stand? What we call reprisals Germany calls by another name. Let us not forget that whereas British propaganda has taught the British people to think of this war as having begun in 1939, or a little earlier, the German people see its genesis in the events of 1918-19 and in fifteen nightmare years thereafter.

It is our failure to face the issue there raised which historians will describe as one of the major tragedies of history. In facing that issue NOW, and not in reprisals, Britain's strength lies. I will even go so far as to say that unless she does face it very soon, and seriously attempts to meet its demands, she will have little or no say in the peace.

That will be the theme of my next article.

"Alarm and Despondency"

IMPORTANT RULING

ATENTION is drawn by Civil Liberty, the journal of the National Council for Civil Liberties, to an important authoritative interpretation of Regulation 39BA which makes it clear that it is not directed against the expression of personal opinions (even though they might "cause alarm and despondency"), but against false statements purporting to be official.

The occasion was the appeal (conducted by the NCCL) of Mrs. Rycraft, Chairman of Wood Green Housewives' Club, against a fine of £50 imposed at Wood Green for an alleged offence against the regulation. The appeal was allowed at Middlesex Sessions, on June 15, with costs against the Director of Public Prosecutions.

MUST PROVE "AUTHORITY"

Civil Liberty makes the following observations on this important case.

The appeal was stopped by the court after they had heard only a few of the witnesses available to be called for the defence. The chairman [of the Appeals Committee] said that, after hearing the evidence for the prosecution, the committee were a little unhappy about the case, and that alone entitled the appellant to succeed. After hearing one or two witnesses for the defence, they were quite satisfied that the prosecution must fail.

The chairman added that even if it had been proved that the defendant had used phrases suggesting that Britain would lose the war—and they were perfectly satisfied that she had not—yet it would still rest upon the prosecution to prove that the defendant was in such a position that hearers might think her views were authoritative and possibly true.

This is the first authoritative decision that we know of in which an interpretation of Regulation 39BA has been given. The National Council for Civil Liberties has always argued that the regulation was aimed only at "statements or reports" which purport to have some authority and that expressions of opinion and casual assertions of fact should never be made the subject of a charge under this or any other regulation.

An Amazing Report

The following appeared in the Sunday Dispatch (July 27).

This message was circulated by the British United Press last night: "Hitler is sterilizing all males in occupied countries and crossing the females with young Germans," said Sir Gerald Campbell, Director of British Information services, in New York today.

We do not believe that Sir Gerald Campbell actually made any such remark. But if he did, he should be recalled immediately.

PROPAGANDA AGAIN

IN the current Picture Post Mr. Kingsley Martin and Mr. Edward Hulton are desperately unhappy about the futility of British propaganda. Both of them appear to believe that it would be quite easy for the British Government, if only it had the will to do so, to produce an effective propaganda.

This assumption, we believe, is baseless. The position of Britain is such that it is incapable of producing any propaganda that will be effective in Europe today. These wistful believers in a possible and perfect propaganda forget one simple fact. Germany has had some. Our propaganda for a new democratic Europe based on President Wilson's 14 points contributed to the internal collapse of Germany in 1918. In the event it appeared to the average decent German that British propaganda had deliberately deceived him. That is how Hitler regarded our use of the propaganda "weapon," and in this at least he faithfully echoed the sentiment of Germans at large.

This, then, is the initial difficulty under which our propaganda labours in regard to Germany—the impossibility of saying anything about our intentions toward Germany that is likely to be believed. Of course, when we tell the Germans that we are going to bomb them to blazes, or starve them into skeletons, or put them into everlasting servitude—they believe that. And very naturally they decide that, when it comes to bombing and starving and enslaving they will follow Hitler, and get their blow in first.

But if we were to propose intentions toward them of a higher order—such as treating the German people as completely equal with ourselves in a new society of nations—they would be entirely sceptical. So should we, if we had endured Germany's experience since the last war.

So perhaps it is as well that the British Government does not even attempt to tell Germany the tale, and that our propaganda toward Germany substantially consists, as it does, in the assurance that we are going to give

them hell, if we can. That corresponds much more nearly to the truth of the situation than any of the dream-propaganda of Mr. Martin or Mr. Hulton would ever do. This war is a naked struggle between two mighty Powers for the hegemony of Europe.

Having conquered Europe with an astonishing economy of force, Germany is now engaged in the attempt to make Russia a negligible factor. In the East is now being fought the decisive battle of the war. For without the thought of Russia to worry him Hitler can act as though Britain were impotent in Europe, as indeed she would be.

This situation will not be changed by propaganda. We were once given the chance of building a new, better order of Europe in deed according to our word. We threw the chance away. When the moral test came we failed as miserably as any nation has ever failed. The fatal defect of complacent democracy—lack of imagination—was revealed in us. We can hardly expect to be given a second chance.

A PACIFIST COMMENTARY:
EDITED BY "OBSERVER"

The Blasphemy of State-Worship

IT is, alas, inevitable that in writing a weekly commentary upon events one should neglect, under the compulsion to generalize, the subtleties which make the background of the world-crisis today. This week, I take the opportunity of clarifying my general attitude. Normally, in order to express myself in a paragraph, I have to disregard distinctions which could only be made valid in a volume.

There are distinctions—at their own level, important distinctions—to be made between German Nazism and Russian Communism. But it is my duty as a pacifist who is committed to regarding the individual human person not as a means but as an end, to insist that both systems alike are evil, and evil in the same way. Both commit the supreme blasphemy of exalting the State beyond all morality. In Germany and Russia alike, the State is endowed with the prerogatives that belong to God alone.

"God's Judgment"

PROBABLY it is necessary that mankind shall pass through this diabolism of State-worship. In language that is natural to me, though perhaps not to many of my readers, this is God's judgment upon mankind. It seems to me that mankind has deserved this judgment, and that now it cannot escape it. The process of total war, waged nominally on the British side against this diabolism of the deified State, brings us nearer to it ourselves.

Britain fights, nominally, against the godless society of Nazism; it forgets the plain truth of which a Russian correspondent to the Christian News-Letter (June 23) reminds it: that "Bourgeois society has long been a godless society, not only in its conscious ideas, but in its life, which is much more important." German Nazism and Russian Communism are avowedly godless in the simple sense that they endow the State with the prerogatives of God. But at least they know what they are doing; and

to that extent they are nearer to salvation than we are. There is a sacrificial element both in Communism and Nazism which is superior to the inert godlessness of bourgeois society in Britain.

Preferences

THAT does not imply that either Russia or Germany is better than Britain. Nazism and Communism have sprung from nations which have endured despair. Until Britain also has endured despair, one cannot profitably compare Britain with Germany or Russia. Britain may have the potentiality of a more human society than either. If so, it will be in virtue of the positiveness, the religious depth, of her inward resistance to the idolatry of the State.

On the other hand, to make a valid objective comparison between Germany and Russia seems also impossible. They have in common the idolatry of the State: but the good and evil are so differently mixed within them that preference depends upon idiosyncrasy. I think I would rather live in Communist Russia than in Nazi Germany, simply because there is a naive universalism in the Communist orthodoxy. But I do not know whether that abstract preference would stand the test of experience. Anyhow, I should be "liquidated" in either society.

Russia & Germany

HAVING declared my basic attitude as far as I can, in three summary and hurried paragraphs, I am free to resume my commentary on events. I will begin it with a series of confessions on another level. I think that Germany will win this colossal and terrible struggle against Russia. If I am asked to say: What issue to that struggle do I desire?—I am unable to answer. I do not know. If I am asked: Why do you not desire a Russian victory over Germany? I can only say it is because I believe that the ensuing revolutionary upheaval in Germany and Eastern Europe would be more appalling than anything Europe has yet endured.

But a Russian victory over Germany seems to me highly improbable. More clearly within the realm of possibility is that Russia may have the strength so to prolong the struggle that Germany will be exhausted in the effort to stabilize the position. The consequences of such a situation are incalculable—at any rate by me. But the possibility seems remote. Modern mechanized warfare of this intensity depends upon industrial production; and the probability is that Germany will have seized the most important centres of Russian industrial and oil production before the strain of her effort becomes unendurable. That is my opinion.

IT'S SUCH FUN!

Cheers for John Robinson's article "They Also Serve..." (Peace News, July 18). How often is that large inactive section of PPU signatories condemned for its sloth; how seldom are we warned against the smaller number who err on the opposite extreme.

But why this mania for "doing something"? Is it really, as John Robinson calls it, "activity for activity's sake"? Is it not often activity for pleasure's sake?

DON'T look at it from the pacifist point of view for a moment. Imagine yourself a man or woman who believes Hitler to be the cause and not an effect of European decay. How simplified your position becomes.

You are shown the single goal at which you must aim. You are offered the choice of a hundred ways to achieve it. You can put your money into the Post Office Savings' Bank. "You can help to build me a gun." You can knit or grow cabbages. You may even attend dances and whist drives, knowing that at the same time you are doing your bit.

Cabbages are satisfying vegetables to grow. You enjoy whist and dancing. The path of duty suddenly becomes pleasant.

Let us consider your position. Twenty-two were you when the war began? Four years since you left school? You enjoyed being at school; were in all the XIs and XVs. Then you left to go into an office. Oh yes, it was grand fun at first. You joined the local sports teams; began to go to dances; joined the territorials—as a part of local social life, of course, not because you thought the country should be defended. But after four years it began to pall a little, didn't it? You were rather fed up with your job.

WAR "HAPPENS"

Then war "broke out." Like measles. Quite impossible to prevent. Having a commission in the territorials you were drafted into the regular army. Of course, you would have joined up anyway. And as for the chap who suggests that you welcomed

it as an escape from your office stool, well, he's a downright rotter.

But what are you going to do afterwards? It's grand fun now, but will you really return contentedly to your stool? And you, who work in a food office, and you, who do full-time ARP, won't you be just a little sorry "when it's all over" and you have to relinquish the secretaryships and presidencies of your ARP badminton clubs and your savings' groups? Won't it be just a little dull afterwards? Won't you be inclined to look back and to say, "Those were the days"?

It's a grand life. Spending your your nights in a shelter can be rather fun, provided it isn't your district that gets -the bombs; if you don't think too much; if you have a thermos and a pack of cards. And switching on the wireless to hear how many planes are down is almost as good as continual test-match results.

Of course, we must keep ourselves occupied. Keep on the move and don't think.

NOW does the pacifist movement take a lesson from this? No sir, it does not. We have, instead, a section of thought which expresses itself at regular intervals in a call for lightheartedness and cheerfulness.

"Laughter in wartime." As though there were not enough already. As though that weren't the very trouble. Are we downhearted? No! We can take it! And down the corridors of the PPU the same spirit blows breezily. A jollity, a heartiness, that goes hand in hand with John Robinson's "activity."

"We get the impression that Mr. Churchill is enjoying himself im-

Hitler Must Federate

NEVERTHELESS, though I believe that Germany will win, I have little doubt that this struggle with Russia will ultimately be fatal to the German dream of dominating Europe. It will not be fatal to that dream in the way Mr. Churchill hopes. It will not give the British the opportunity of dividing and ruling Europe once again. By the sheer magnitude of the German burden of responsibility, the impossibility of continuing to domineer over all the nations of Europe—"In imperialism, nothing fails like success"—Hitler will be compelled to make his "empire" a confederation of some sort. That, it is true, will not suit the present British Government; for Germany will probably be able to assemble a European conference at which the nations of Europe will be represented by governments more genuinely representative than the "free governments" in London.

Alternative Criterion

BRITAIN has no principle on which to base any alternative "confederation" of Europe. Thus, for example, the Franco government in Spain, which would be a willing partner in Hitler's confederation, would equally be welcomed as a partner by Britain. It is our profession that "nations" are the real political entities, and that their systems of government are indifferent. We cannot insist on "democracy" as a condition of validity. What is "democracy" anyhow? Is Britain herself a "democracy"? Detached observers would say that Britain is a peculiar combination of aristocracy, plutocracy, democracy—and, most practically important of all—a stubborn residue of individual liberties.

The criterion most truly congenial to the British genius of the right of a nation to membership of a European confederation would be its acceptance of some such charter of "the rights of man" as Mr. Wells has drawn up, which the PPU has now incorporated into its policy. The adoption of that criterion by the British Government in a great public declaration might be devoid of immediate practical consequences; but it would be a creative act. It would reveal to the world a Britain at least conscious of its own tradition and of its responsibility for the future.

Hope Of Anarchy

BUT, as things are, Britain has no criterion at all for membership of a juster "new Europe" than Hitler's. Britain is not anti-totalitarian—we are allied with Russia; it is not anti-authoritarian—we are only too anxious to deal with Franco's Spain, and we love the Magyar reactionaries; we are anti-nothing at all: except Hitler. Why? Partly, no

says

Robert Sargeant

mensely" writes "Observer." That is perfect. But when we see PPU members whipping out their engagement books, flying up the stairs of Dick Sheppard House three at a time, buzzing hither and thither at the bidding of the queen-bee of organization, then we get the impression that it is not only the Prime Minister who is having a good time. Activity and jollity. A sense of humour let us by all means keep alive, but heartiness is fatal.

CHECK THE FEVER

At times I am inclined to agree with the woman who told me that the only cheering thing she found in the PPU was John Middleton Murry's "tragic face." If we really believe that the movement has other potentialities, let us pause for a minute in our fever of activity, let us stop running, let us stop forming policies and pursuing them with vigour.

Let us open those busy engagement books and reserve, for once, 5 minutes for ourselves. We are certain to derive more benefit in the way of personal development in those five minutes of sitting still than in 24 hours of "doing something." Certain it is that unless we do sit still we shall develop little. Certain that unless we develop personally a lifetime of activity will be of small value to other people.

Let us examine ourselves on this question of "laughter in wartime," and make quite certain that we are not going to be even a little disappointed "when it's all over." Even if we do satisfy ourselves on this point, we should do well to reflect on Aldous Huxley's words:—

"Doing good on any but the finest scale requires more intelligence than most people possess. They ought to be content with keeping out of mischief: it's easier and it doesn't have such frightful results as trying to do good in the wrong way. Twiddling the thumbs and having good manners are much more helpful, in most cases, than rushing about with good intentions, doing things."

doubt, because he indiscriminately menaces all four elements of our unique combination—our aristocracy, our plutocracy, our democracy, and our individual liberties; but mainly because he has abolished the anarchy of Europe. That we cannot accept. In the realm of power politics it threatens Britain with incessant danger. A united Europe always has done.

The only kind of European confederation that would suit British "interests" is one paralysed by internal conflicts—a European "democracy," so to speak, incapable of unity in action. That is why we—or the obsolete mentalities which govern our policy—dare not go beyond the now barren principle of sovereign and independent nations; they alone give us the hope of the European anarchy which is our traditional safeguard. Unfortunately for us, Europe is tired of anarchy.

Germany Must Lead

THUS it is that British policy is condemned to nullity. Indeed, Britain dares not have a policy. We dare not act in accordance with our knowledge: for even the British Government knows perfectly well that "neutrality" is an impossible fiction in modern Europe. If "neutrality" is an impossible fiction, so is independent national sovereignty. In a Europe where national sovereignty exists no longer, the most powerful industrial nation must take the lead. (These are really two modes of describing the same situation).

We can prevent German leadership in Europe only by systematically destroying her factories and preventing her by main force from exploiting her natural resources: in other words, in our Europe of independent sovereign nations, we have to prevent Germany from existence as a nation. We shall have to do this ourselves. France will not lend a hand: she has had some. We cannot let Russia do it: a Communist Europe would be just as much a danger to Churchill's Britain as a Nazi Europe.

"Ah, but we would gladly allow any other Germany but Hitler's to lead Europe!" That is humbug, even if we believe it. Hitler's Germany is anathema because it does lead Europe. That is Hitler's crime in the eyes of the British Government—nothing else. Hitler is no more of a blackguard today than he was at the time of Munich.

Britain's Choice

THERE are two practical alternatives for British policy: either to press on to the unimaginable end with the effort to prevent Germany from national existence—to annihilate her industry, and shatter her policy, and keep them annihilated and shattered; or to withdraw from Europe altogether—to disinterest ourselves in Europe, as the diplomats say. That is the expression of our objective status in the Europe of today. If that prospect fills us with mortal dread—as it undoubtedly fills Mr. Churchill—why, we shall fight on till we drop, in the hope of somehow achieving the extermination of Germany. Conversely, Germany, Hitlerite or otherwise, will fight on till she drops to prevent us from achieving it. The only remedy is to take a bold initiative and abandon the realm of power politics—the kingdom of the Prince of this world—as far as we humanly can.

The Premier and Bombing

The National Council of the Peace Pledge Union, in the course of its meeting during the weekend, July 19-20, discussed the question of air bombing with special reference to the Prime Minister's speech of July 14.

A letter has been sent on behalf of the National Council of the PPU to the Prime Minister disputing the accuracy of his interpretation of the attitude of the people of London and adding:

To the best of our knowledge and belief the people of any bombed city would welcome a convention under which the bombing of all cities would cease, and we are certainly convinced that there is no real desire for revenge or reprisals in the shape of making Germans suffer in their own homeland. So far, at least, as the bombed areas of London are concerned, a recent survey bears out this view about reprisals. So far as the convention is concerned, the matter is easily proved—give the people of London a chance to express their opinions.

On a matter which is literally one of life and death to thousands, it is surely not too much to suggest that you should substantiate your claim either by producing the evidence on which it is based or by putting the suggestion of a convention to the people of London. We ask you specifically—would you be prepared to enter into a convention to stop the bombing of all cities if it could be shown that the people would welcome it?

Moreover, we deplore the fact that the British Government have taken the initiative in deliberately approving the character of total war by accepting as part of their plan the increasing bombing of civilians.

We are gravely concerned with the kind of world which will follow this war. The future welfare of Europe demands the co-operation of the German people with the people of this and other nations. We cannot but deeply regret this further attempt to stir up and minister to a spirit of revenge, and we feel bound to add that by the matter and tone of your speeches you are doing a grave disservice to the cause of the ultimate peace which we all profess to desire.

Women and the Peace Pledge

By SYBIL MORRISON

WHEN Dick Sheppard first wrote an open letter to the press inviting signatures to a pledge renouncing war he did not include women in the invitation. Perhaps this was because he believed women to be more pacifist in outlook than men, and therefore it was unnecessary, but we know that when it was decided to extend to women the invitation to take the pledge, Dick Sheppard was so sure that the women would quickly outnumber the men that he planned in advance to limit women signatories to the same number as men signatories.

This plan was never needed; women did not answer to the call in the way Dick Sheppard had expected; they are still considerably outnumbered by the men. Now Dick Sheppard was a man of vision, and at this moment, when women are being compelled to take part in the war machine, when the whole structure of family life is threatened, the time has surely come when we should ask ourselves how it is that his judgment in this respect was at fault.

It may well be that many women, though pacifist in outlook, are kept back from active participation in the work by the idea, handed down through many hundreds of years, that they have a place allotted to them in which it is their duty to remain—the kitchen, the nursery, the drawing room, the typist's room, the factory, the less well-paid positions. It is taken for granted that administrative work is done by men. Even in these days of progressive thought, when more and more women are on councils, on committees, in Parliament and in professions, the majority of women still acquiesce in the idea that it is the man's business to organize, the man's business to make his voice heard in the affairs of the nation and the world, the man's business to struggle for reforms and resist social evils.

Now that there is no longer a separate section in the PPU for women's work it is important that we should try individually, to bring more women into the movement. The Co-operative Women's Guilds passed a resolution at their last Annual Congress deploring the compulsory registration of women. Here is a common basis on which we may perhaps persuade the Guilds back to pacifism.

The pacifist movement needs the women to take equal responsibility; the pledge is as much their business as the men's. To renounce war is not a mere refusal to kill, it is a positive statement of our inalienable right to reject what we believe to be evil. It will not, to my mind, be a weakening but a strengthening of the movement when Dick's vision comes true and the number of women equals the number of men in the Peace Pledge Union.

"There can be no defeat"

There can be no defeat since that day there was a tale uncovered and jewels unstored to take my beloved from me. Now the lands that are left lie cold south-sloping to the sun. Yet there is no summer in the years I see, yet I go singing with my pitcher to the well, happy even to my death knowing there was love.

There can be no defeat. Say, Citizen, there is no need to shout it in the market-place. They will know lies cannot make slaves of us long, nor hunger. Fire and violence cannot achieve defeat. Brother, though we die weeping bitterly that man should think to buy peace with hate, knowing there was love.

MARGARET L. BROOKS

WAR EFFORT

The Churches in Britain are mostly doing war work of some kind," Ben Sullivan told Australian listeners, (reports The Listener, May 15). "Their war consciousness took a new form the other day, when a clergyman published some hymns written to meet modern conditions. One verse ends:

Bless our airmen in the sky,
Safe as angels may they fly."

NEWS from FRANCE

"One of the strangest and most troublesome features of the present situation," says The Times Literary Supplement (July 19), is the absence of news from France. What is going on in Paris, in Rouen, is less well-known than what is going on in Chungking or Buenos Aires."

The following article by Mr. J. Hampden Jackson, which appeared in The Eastern Daily Press (July 15), lifts the veil a little.

SINCE a line of actual news is worth a column of generalization, I would like this week to tell the story of a French family during the last year. It has come to me through rare and scanty letters, but knowing the writers well makes it possible to build up a fairly complete picture of their lives since the armistice.

The family consists of an elderly father and his four daughters and one son, all of them in their twenties except the youngest girl. The father is a retired schoolmaster living with his youngest daughter in his own house in a suburb of Paris. He has always been an Anglophile by sympathy and a fighter by temperament. What the defeat and capitulation meant to him morally is hard to imagine; he retired into his religious life and cut himself off from all thoughts about the political world.

Physically this past year has been one of severe but not drastic privation. Food was hard to come by in Paris last winter, and even the habit of frugality and an innate asceticism did not enable him to keep the wolf from the door. The girl fell ill and was treated most admirably in a French hospital. This term she has been back at school—one of those lycées founded by Napoleon and later adapted to the best traditions of French republican education.

Of the other daughters, the eldest married to a Norman doctor who was in the army for the first nine months of the war. During the fighting last summer she moved from her house on the coast into Southern Normandy, but soon returned to the port, where her second child was born. Neither German military preparations nor British bombing seems to have disturbed her

family life or the medical practice of her husband.

The other girls happened to be in that part of France which was left unoccupied. They were teachers in village schools. One of them married last summer and has had a child. Her husband was demobilized early and now holds a post in local government service in the south.

Her sister is still a teacher: the village school seems much as usual, though with the minor worries of rationing and evacuees such as its counterparts in this country have known. She has been a lover of England since infancy and her letters breathe the same affection for and confidence in England that she expressed here in Norfolk two summers ago. She seems to have little fear of the censorship, though her pen runs to prudent and vague generalities: she longs for the day "Où la vérité sera connue par tous."

The boy is a soldier in Weygand's army. He has been stationed in Oran throughout most of the last year, and though he has had an attack of dysentery and of one or two other barrack diseases, he is wonderfully well and reasonably content. Quite recently he has been home on leave to visit his sisters in Vichy France.

He seems to take his service in Oran very much as a matter of course. If there had been no war he would still have been doing his "service militaire," and the enemy whose expected aggression he would have been training to resist would still have been the same.

How far this family is typical no one can say, but it is hard to believe that it is startlingly exceptional. It has always been an Anglophile family, but there were many such in France. It was not a politically-minded family, but that was no more unusual in the French than in the British middle-class.

Its members have been through hardships, privations, separation, but

A glimpse of a typical French Family

nothing worse. The sons-in-law are back from the war and follow their professions; the married daughters have had healthy babies; the unmarried have gone on with their careers. Nothing is broken, nothing irreparable. Faith, hope, and charity remain.

Readers will draw their own morals from this story. Some will deplore the lack of political-mindedness which has enabled this French family to accept dishonour and to settle down under German occupation or Pétain dictatorship with no more complaint than the English housewife levels against Lord Woolton.

Some will welcome that same lack on the grounds that it has enabled life to go on tolerably and has intensified the religious devotion of sincere, if somewhat lax, Catholics.

Others will condemn out of hand the attitude of the whole family since it shows a fundamental selfishness; these people are doing nothing to promote the British victory which is their heart's desire and on which the freedom of their future depends.

But whatever the conclusion, two or three comments can be made. The first is philosophical; totalitarian war does not affect people totally.

The second is political; these people are so mazed by propaganda—British, de Gaulle, Pétainist and German—that they have long since ceased to believe anything that they hear or read; their greatest hunger is for proved facts and proved sympathy, and when our propaganda does not give them those, it is wasted.

The third concerns our own attitude toward the French. Whenever we find fault with "Vichy" we must be careful not to include the French people in that blame. America has given us a good lead in this. But it is ourselves even more than the Americans who will need the friendship and collaboration of the French in the post-Hitler world.

GROUP NOTES

The Meaning of Development

By JOHN BARCLAY

THE first step in translating intention into action is to give a new meaning to certain hackneyed names. It is comparatively easy to call a committee into being and to ask it to work out a scheme of area development. It is no use sitting back and expecting things to happen. Nothing will happen until everyone knows what is expected of them and has a picture in their minds of the whole scheme.

What does area development mean? At the moment there are 14 PPU areas each represented on the National Council.

N. Ireland	N.W. Counties
Yorkshire	N. Wales
N.E. Counties	E. Anglia
S. Wales	W. Midlands
Kent	Scotland
E. Midlands	Hampshire
S.W. Counties	London

The development consists in clearing "the lines behind the lines" so that ideas and help can reach all parts and so that eventually the area becomes a self-administrative unit.

Toward this immediate end area conferences are being called, and every effort should be made to see that your group is represented. The "blue-prints" will be handed over and an attempt will be made to assess the latent energy and organizational power available—or likely soon to be available.

Each area representative is a personality: he should become known as a person. Group leaders and area representatives will necessarily be bound together more closely in future, and any scheme needs co-ordination at this point if it is to succeed. The following questions are listed to assist in this closer knitting:

1. Do you know your Area Representative?
2. Have you met him?
3. How many groups are you in touch with?
4. Is your group anxious to help?

GROUP ACTIVITIES

Evesham. The Evesham and District Branch is having "quite good group meetings now for a country district." The secretary (W. J. Bubb, Rosecroft, S. Littleton, Evesham) is trying to arrange a series of talks on the implications of pacifism. There is a good number of young COs in the district working in agriculture who greatly appreciate the fellowship of a group. At a meeting in the Friends' Meeting House, Cowsl St., arranged for 8 o'clock tonight (Friday) Sydney Conbeer, Chairman of the Birmingham Council of the PPU, is to speak on "A planned State and the individual."

Wrexham. A weekend school devoted to the subject of community will be held on August 15 and 16 at the Dick Sheppard Centre, 51 King St., Wrexham, the lecturer at all sessions being Wilfred Wellock. The title for the first session (7.30 p.m. on the Friday) will be "The break-up of a social order and the necessity for community," and the Saturday session will be on "The nature, method, and function of community" (2.30 p.m.) and "Social salvation via community" (6 p.m.). Admission will be by ticket only and tickets (1s. for three sessions and tea) are obtainable from the group secretary, Rex. Halsall, 4 Gloucester Drive, Wrexham.

THE basis of the Peace Pledge Union is the following pledge which is signed by each member:

I RENOUNCE WAR AND I WILL NEVER SUPPORT OR SANCTION ANOTHER.

The address to which new signatures of the pledge should be sent, and from which further particulars may be obtained, is:

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John W. Cowling and W.J.S.N. Grindlay. Chairman: Maurice Rowntree

Send admission fee, 1s. (includes tea—bring food) for credentials, to: Donald Port, 8 Endsleigh Gardens, W.C.1.

NEWS of C.O.s

"Cat and Mouse" Goes On

IN spite of repeated assurances that the Government recognized the injustice of and desired to prevent the "cat and mouse" treatment of conscientious objectors, no serious attempt appears to be being made by the Government to stop it.

The practice operates through courts-martial not awarding such sentences as would qualify COs to avail themselves of the safeguard provided by Parliament in the military service Acts. That is, instead of sentences of imprisonment of three months or more, they either give shorter terms of imprisonment or, more often, periods of detention, notwithstanding that courts-martial have been fully acquainted with the position regarding the CO's safeguard against repeated sentences for virtually the same offence.

The Central Board for Conscientious Objectors continues to press the War Office to take steps to end the practice.

A CHANGING ATTITUDE

INDICATIONS of a changing attitude to COs on the part of employers come from London and Birmingham.

Proposing that the ban on the employment of conscientious objectors in the LCC Civil Defence services should be raised, the Civil Defence Committee states in a report issued on July 25: "Since air raids began there has been a change in the attitude of members of Civil Defence services toward conscientious objectors employed in those services, due to the obviously dangerous and arduous work which they have undertaken."

The ban, which was imposed in June, 1940, was raised on Tuesday.

DEBT TO C.O.S

At the Birmingham Rotary Club lunch on July 21, the chairman of Birmingham ARP Committee, Councillor Norman Tipstaff, said:

Conscientious objectors have carried out rescue work of the most dangerous kind without trepidation. I have never had any use for conscientious objectors as a body, but we are all indebted to them for some of the work they have done. They have done a marvellously good job, and I am glad to be able to pay this tribute to them.

The Lancashire Education Committee, on the other hand, decided on July 21 to give three months' notice to Mr. W. Goom, headmaster of Westhoughton Senior Boys' council school, who had refused to register, refused to pay a consequent fine, and had been notified that his goods would be distrained upon.

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NO WOMEN CONSCRIPTS

There is at present no intention to apply conscription to women, said Mr. Tomlinson (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Labour) in the Commons on Tuesday. Women with no occupation were called for an interview before those in employment, and single women were interviewed before married ones. Those with children under 14 living with them were not called for interview.

ADVISORY BUREAUX CHANGES

Durham.—L. Colling, 44 Baff St., Spenny-moor.

Hull.—E. Mashford, "Mavonne," Hull Bridge, Beverley.

Wolverhampton.—R. C. Cockerill, 11 Richmond Ave., Wolverhampton.

Ystalyfera.—W. Samuel, Ty'r Werin, Ystalyfera.

The Lincoln bureau is (contrary to a previous report) still in existence, and the secretary is B. McCarthy, 39 Foss Bank, Lincoln.

Branches of the Pacifist Landworkers Association are in the process of formation in many parts of the country, and it is interesting to note the surprisingly large proportion of COs on the land who are not members of the PPU. The organizing secretary is Douglas G. Rogers, 4 Lime-tree Avenue, Esher, Surrey.

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C.O.s, land workers, need "Primus" (or paraffin) stoves, cooking utensils; gift or nominal price.—Nicholson, Youth Hostel, Stony Stratford, Bucks.

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C.O. requires to buy or rent small market garden, 3-10 acres, with cottage or bungalow.—Bentley, Furzen Leaze Farm, Cirencester.

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C.O., 29, eight months' agriculture, seeks market garden work near London; would assist community enterprise without payment.—Box 866, Peace News, 3 Blackstock Rd., N.4.

PACIFIST, married (child 11 years), exempt, desires agricultural work (not drainage); inexperienced, willing; West Country preferred.—Herd, 61a Queen's Drive, London, N.4.

WANTED, Partner to assist C.O. in orchard and market garden; hard worker essential, small capital required; Middx. area.—Box 865, Peace News, 3 Blackstock Rd., N.4.

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